



Alaska Marine Policy Forum

Summary from Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Host: Molly McCammon, Alaska Ocean Observing System

Notes by Holly Kent

The Alaska Marine Policy Forum is a bimonthly teleconference for Alaskans to network and share information about marine policy, budgets, and legislation at state, national, and international levels, sponsored by Alaska Sea Grant and the Alaska Ocean Observing System. Contact dawn.montano@alaska.edu to receive email reminders and agendas for upcoming calls, and summary notes following each call. Visit the AOOS website to listen to an audio recording of this call.

Alaska Congressional Delegation Update

Carina Nichols, Senator Sullivan's Office

- The Senator's office has been working on the COVID relief package and getting lots of feedback from constituents on what will or will not be included.
- They have been closely following the Senator's Save Our Seas marine debris bill and are hoping to get it passed before the end of the year.
- Their office has been really engaged in the cancelled fishery surveys and trying to get a plan together for 2021.
- They remain engaged on tariffs and trade issues.
- Looking for the Young Fisherman's Development Act to pass the Senate soon.

Kayla Rillo, Congressman Young's Office

- [The Great American Outdoors Act](#) just passed and is going to the President for signature.
- Currently working on both Interior Department and Commerce Department appropriations.
- They are also working on the COVID relief package.
- There was quite a bit of follow-up needed with the Save our Seas bill due to its review by several different committees in the House after passing the Senate.

Amy Kirkham, Senator Murkowski's Office

- The COVID relief package has been their top priority.
- The Senator is trying to get more relief for the Alaska seafood industry.
- [The Blue Globe Act](#), introduced by Senators Murkowski and Whitehouse, made it through committee and is moving forward.
- Senators Murkowski and Whitehouse introduced [The Blue Carbon for Our Planet Act](#) in June and are very interested in any feedback from Alaska stakeholders. Amy can be contacted at Amy_Kirkham@murkowski.senate.gov.

COVID-19 Response Efforts in Fishing Communities

Gabe Dunham, Alaska Sea Grant

- Alaska Sea Grant has produced a couple webinars, [Economic Relief for Alaska's Small Seafood Businesses](#) and [Introduction to Starting and Operating a Seafood Direct Marketing Business 2020](#), published an article [Tips for Managing Risk and Uncertainty in Your Fishing Business](#), and developed a [farm-to-table mariculture directory for Alaska](#) to assist Fishers in Alaska.

Davin Holen, Alaska Sea Grant

- Alaska Sea Grant is part of a large National Science Foundation project on navigating the new Arctic called [Polaris](#).
- The goal of the project is to look at how to mitigate risk in fisheries.
- Alaska Sea Grant and partners developed a survey to find out what kinds of issues stakeholders would like to have covered for the project.
- Once the results of the survey have been summarized the team will develop risk management strategies to make available to the public in time for next year's fishing season.

Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G)

- The fishing industry, ADF&G staff, and processors have done a great job working together to operate fisheries during the pandemic.
- No fisheries were closed as a result of COVID.

Robert J. Foy, Science & Research Director, Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC), NMFS-NOAA

- The AFSC has conducted a number of surveys this summer in Southeast Alaska and some research process studies in Bristol Bay.
- Commercial fisheries in the state are being monitored through the Observer Program.
- The AFSC has three Saldrones working to collect acoustic data to mitigate the loss of mid-water pelagic trawl data from cancelled surveys.
- They are also working to collect data from moorings in the Bering Sea.

Arctic Policy Working Group, Commonwealth North

Mead Treadwell, Commonwealth North

- Commonwealth North was founded by two former governors of Alaska as a non-partisan organization with a goal of helping Alaska reach its statehood goals of sustainable development and self-determination.
- They published a report, [Why the Arctic Matters](#), eleven years ago.
- Commonwealth North formed the Arctic Working Group in response to the U.S. Government's undertaking to update its Arctic Strategy.
- The working group will review previous recommendations included in its report from 2009 and update and revise those in an updated report to be shared with the White House.
- This effort will ensure that Alaskans' voices are heard for the update of the U.S. Arctic Strategy.
- The group welcomes participation from interested Alaskans. More information on the study sessions and how to participate can be found on their [website](#).
- This slide presentation can be accessed [here](#).

Announcements

- Molly McCammon - AOS and UAF just published a report [Bering Science: Spring 2020 Bering Region Ocean Update](#), AOS has secured funding for the upcoming year to hire a coordinator for the Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network ([position announcement](#)).
- Davin Holen - More information on the Polaris project mentioned earlier can be found [here](#).

Next Alaska Marine Policy Forum call: September 16, 2020, 1 pm Alaska time.